

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Fire and Aviation  
3833 South Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705

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Information Bulletin No. OF&A 99-010

To: All Field Offices

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation  
Assistant Director, Renewable Resources and Planning

Subject: Bureau Fuels Management Program Review for 2823 Activity

Congress created and funded a new subactivity in FY 1998 titled Hazardous Fuels Reduction Operations (2823). This program is commonly referred to as the Fuels Management Program. This new program was addressed in numerous memorandums in 1998, had significant coverage in both the 1998 and 1999 PAWP's, and was a major component of both the National Rangelands Workshop and the National Fuels Management Workshop held in Boise last spring. When this new program was established, the four Interior agencies affected (BLM, BIA, FWS, NPS) agreed to perform a review of their first year's activities before the second field season started. The 1999 PAWP, 1800 section (Program Evaluations), identifies this review, which is the subject of this memo.

The goal of the review is to provide a national look at the Fuels Management Program and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our activities. By performing the review at the end of the first year of this new program, we hope to identify issues and opportunities and correct problems before they become standard practices. Our goal is to learn from our mistakes and to move on.

The objectives of this task are:

1. Review the FY98 fuels management (2823) expenditures and process used to establish cost targets and determine if the processes and guidance addressed in the fund coding handbook, PAWP, and Instruction Memorandum were followed.
2. Determine if the processes and guidance are appropriate and understood, and make recommendations for adjustments, if necessary.
3. Determine if the accomplishment reporting system(s) meets needs and is being utilized.

The National Office of Fire and Aviation will be responsible for coordinating with Renewable Resources and Planning, and Budget for issuing the guidance derived from the review before the end of April 1999. It will also incorporate the policy portion into BLM Manual Sections 9210.2 and 9214, and if necessary into the Prescribed Fire and Fund Code Handbooks. The process related guidance will be incorporated into the Standards for Fire Operations (Red Book).

The process for this review will follow the successful model used a couple of years ago to evaluate the Bureau's fire severity program. The review will be performed by five teams of 3-4 employees. Each team will consist of one budget or finance person, a resource specialist, and one fire and/or fuels manager. The leader for each team will be the budget representative. Each team will be assigned two states with no team having a member who will be reviewing their own state. The visitations are planned to occur in January and early February of 1999. Each team's chairperson or representative will meet in Boise on the week of February 23, 1999, to review the findings and recommendations and revise the current fuels program guidance, as needed. The recommendations will be presented at the March National Fire Policy Implementation Workshop in Boise. The scope of this review is Bureauwide (although team visitations to Eastern States and Alaska are not planned, these states will be interviewed). The Team composition is as follows:

#### **Team Members and Evaluation Sites:**

Team #1 ID/Fire CT./OR	Team #2 MT/WY/AK	Team #3 CO/UT	Team #4 CA/AZ	Team#5 NM/NV
Andy Smith	Rulon Duncan	Dave Burley	Bob Kempf	John Vest
Butch Hayes	Art Porter	Al Alvarez	John Shive	Carl Gossard
Linda Price	Jenna Whitlock	Ken Stinson	Clint Oke	Cal McClusky
*	*	*	*	*

\* A National Office and an Interagency Fuels Manager (BIA, FWS, NPS) may also participate.

To guide the teams and to assist all those involved with the task to focus on the objectives of the review, a preliminary Checklist has been developed. This Checklist will not limit discussions; all relevant information will be addressed.

**Evaluation Checklist:**

1. Review program costs; are expenditures appropriate?
  - a. Implementation (Program Element 00) - labor, travel, per diem, supplies, purchases, etc., and review specialists funded on a project-by-project basis.
  - b. Program Support (Program Element 01)- labor, travel, training, equipment, etc.
2. Review the processes and costs of interagency assistance activities. (Supporting documents: E-Mail guidance, formal agreement, 1202 and FFS printouts)
3. Check all 2823 expenditures that are attached to wild fire numbers and determine the reason(s). (Supporting documents: printouts)
4. Determine the amount of 2823 being used for administrative support. Is the guidance that states, “we are not to exceed more than 5% for administrative support for the organizational level directly responsible for implementing fuels management activities,” being followed? (Supporting documents: none)
5. Review non-fuels personnel time coding when working on project related activities (e.g., EA’s, clearances, objective development, commodity coordination, long-term monitoring, etc.). (Supporting documents: printouts of 010 charges)
6. Are Hazardous Fuel Reduction operations funds (2823) being used as a rangeland health ecosystem restoration fund? Is 2823 funding seedings and chemical treatments, etc?
7. Determine if there is a complete file for each project and if it contains a copy of a DI-1202 and a RIPS report, and if affected personnel know its location. (Supporting document: 9214-1, Sections 3-5)
- 8.. Review to determine if the interdisciplinary process is being utilized, and if external coordination is occurring (State Air Quality, Fish and Game, etc.). Are these external partners involved early on in the process, or consulted after fuels treatment sites and objectives have been established?
9. What kind of planning document supports the request for fuels project funds, and how is management (Field and State) involved in the decisionmaking process for prioritizing

funding requests?

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10. Were there any prescribed fires escapes; was the review process followed? (Support document: 9214-1, 8-1)
11. What are the constraining or binding factors to having a quality sustained Hazardous Fuels Reduction Operations program?

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Gardner Ferry at 208-387-5161, or Tim Hartzell at 202-452-5191.

Signed by:

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